



RUNGE CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

HABITAT HAPPENINGS

10th
Birthday

1993

2003

May and June 2003

Poison Ivy



Hugs are wonderful. Hugging a favorite person or special stuffed toy makes one happy and brings comfort. Some things just look huggable, like a furry animal, or big stately oak trees. Other things look downright UNhuggable, like worms or prickly pear cactus. Wander through your garden and make a list of huggable and unhuggable things. The following three plants earned the top rating for UNhuggable from me!

Either as a shrub or vine, **poison ivy** is one plant you do not want to hug! Well known for its ability to make us miserable, this plant causes a rash called contact dermatitis when touched. The plant produces a toxin, in the form of oil, which can be passed from the plant to just about anything. Your dog can carry it on its fur. It can even be found on your hiking boots a year after your trip outdoors! Protect yourself by learning to identify and avoid poison ivy.

A perfect sunny day can be clouded by walking through a patch of **nettle**. Found sprouting in early spring through summer, stinging nettle and wood nettle have small hollow hairs that break off on contact with our skin. These hairs act as tiny needles that pierce the skin and inject an acidic toxin, causing a burning, itching sensation. As with any acid, you can reduce the pain by adding a basic material. A baking soda and water mixture can be applied to stop the sting. Your saliva is also slightly basic, and spitting on the affected area can temporarily soothe.

Sensitive brier is another plant you do not want to hug. Found statewide in glades and fields, this brier stands up to its prickly name. The stem and fruit are covered in thorns that can puncture through your clothes to the skin. Even its Latin name means "barbed." The plant gets its common name by the way the leaves curl when touched.

Hugs are enjoyable. Humans love contact with one another. While plants produce attractive flowers and food for wildlife, coming into contact with some species can be a rather unpleasant experience. Learn to identify UNhuggable plants around you, and always look before you touch.



Sensitive Brier

THE UNHUGGABLES

Written by Andrea Putnam, Naturalist



Volunteer News



Naturescape Symposium



Twenty-one Runge volunteers helped with the Naturescape Symposium, held on March 15 at the nature center. Five hundred visitors participated in programs, exhibits, crafts, and a workshop—all designed to show people how to introduce native plants and invite wildlife into your backyard.

**Volunteers
Make a
Difference!**



Exhibits

May – Jim D. Wilson

Stop by the nature center anytime in May to view the wonderful artwork of Jim D. Wilson, retired MDC ornithologist. Jim enjoys working with various media, including pen and ink, watercolor, oil, and acrylic. The paintings in this exhibit are originals from Jim D. Wilson's recently published book, *Common Birds of North America - Midwest Edition*. See May's listing for programs and book signing information.

June – Junior Duck Stamp Awards

We are proud to display the winning artwork from Missouri's Junior Duck Stamp Contest. Visit the nature center anytime during June to see the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Honorable Mention entries.

Celebrate! Runge's 10th Birthday

Your birthday gift is here! When you get 10 stamps, just bring your Runge 10th Birthday Passport to the nature center front desk and you will receive your Runge gift bag. Each gift bag is unique and filled with fun and excitement. If you don't have 10 stamps, you still have plenty of time and lots of opportunities. We look forward to seeing you!



Need a passport? Have a question? Call us at 573/526-5544.

Free Fishing

June 7 & 8

Get out and FISH! No fishing permit is required on these two days. Experience the joy of fishing.





Conservation Kids' Club

Welcome to Conservation Kids' Club, a fun club created for kids 6 through 13 years old who love to explore nature and learn about wildlife. Come to one of these meetings and we'll sign you up.

Fishtival

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

6:00 - 8:00 PM Pollywogs (Ages 6 through 8) and Bullfrogs (Ages 9 through 13) combine for this meeting.

Meet us at Binder lake for the Fishtival! We'll learn how to bait a hook, cast a line, and fish the lake's shoreline. Bring your own gear if you have it, but we'll have some to borrow as well. Live bait provided. Come get your line wet!

Directions to Binder: From Capital Mall take Highway 50 West to Apache Flats exit. Pass House of Bargains and turn right on Binder Lake Road. The road will come to a "T" at Rainbow Drive—turn left on Rainbow Drive. You'll pass by the end of the lake on your right side. Turn right after the lake at the gate and this road winds around until you reach the bait shop.

Shutterbug Nature Photography

Tuesday, June 17, 2003

6:00 - 7:00 PM Pollywogs (Ages 6 through 8) have their meeting.

7:00 - 8:00 PM Bullfrogs (Ages 9 through 13) have their meeting.

Don't stay in the "dark room" anymore! "Develop" your hidden talents and discover how to capture a part of nature on film. Learn the basics of nature photography and then go outside to practice your skills. We'll provide the cameras and film.

HEY PARENTS!

While big brother/sister attends **Conservation Kids' Club**, your pre-schooler (3 through 6 years of age) can be involved in a program at the same time!

Fishtival

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

6:00 - 8:00 PM (Ages 3 through 6)

See *Treetop Chatter* for details.

Squirm the Worm

Tuesday, June 17, 2003

6:00 - 7:00 PM (Ages 3 through 6)

Worms don't push their way through dirt, they eat their way! Learn many more interesting facts about these small earth churners.

Scouts...

Just a reminder . . . scout leaders can check out packs from the Runge Conservation Nature Center to help their groups work on badges.

The packs available are:

- Wolf Cub Elective #13 – *Birds*
- Cub Scout Achievement #5 – *Sharing Your World With Wildlife*
- Brownie Try It – *Animals*
- Brownie Try It – *Plants*

What's happening on the trails?

We've been hearing questions from folks who have been out hiking the Runge trails and seeing some of our restoration work. Here's what's going on:



Why are you cutting the trees?

The area around the fire tower is our **savanna**, which is a cross between a prairie and a forest. We have been thinning trees where there were too many, and we will be planting trees where there weren't enough. In time, our savanna will be a continuous grassland, with wildflowers and interspersed trees.

Why are you burning the grasses?

Like prairies, savannas are maintained by fire, so occasionally we use prescribed fire on our prairies, savanna, and glade. Fire benefits natural communities in many ways:

- ◆ removes underbrush and invasive woody plants
- ◆ controls exotic plants
- ◆ recycles nutrients
- ◆ stimulates seeds and new plant growth

Just as our indoor exhibits feature habitats found all over Missouri, we want our outdoor grounds to actually be those habitats, complete with living plants and animals. Our goal is to rebuild working examples of prairies, forests, savannas, glades, and wetlands, and showcase them for everyone. So please be patient—this work will take several years. If you have questions or are just interested in learning more, please stop in the nature center. We are always happy to talk about our natural work in progress.

Runge Conservation Nature Center

is located in western Jefferson City. From U.S. 50, exit on Highway 179. Travel north on 179 for 1/4 mile to the Nature Center entrance on the left. The Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8 AM to 5 PM and Noon to 5 PM on Sundays. Closed New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. No admission fee.
PHONE: 573/526-5544 FAX: 573/526-4496
<<http://www.conservation.state.mo.us>>



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“Show-Me Missouri Fish” Mobile Aquarium **Thursday, May 1** **6:30 PM -- All Ages**

Plunk! Ever wonder how fish react when they see your lure swim past? Here's your chance to see for yourself. This aquarium-on-wheels is 40 feet long! It holds 3,200 gallons of water and up to 70 Missouri native fish, including 15 different species. MDC Fisheries staff will demonstrate fishing techniques from atop the aquarium while discussing how fish ecology, seasonal behavior, and habitats relate to recreational fishing. Come see this impressive slice of the aquatic world, and see how fish behave in their own habitat. No reservations required.

April 30th, May 1st and 2nd

The “Show-Me Missouri Fish” mobile aquarium will be on display with staff available to answer questions from 8 AM-5 PM on April 30th and May 1st, and 8 AM-4 PM on May 2nd. An evening **program** will be offered on **May 1st at 6:30 PM**.

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HABITAT HAPPENINGS
Runge Conservation Nature Center
P.O. Box 180
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Events for... May

Registration for all programs begins on Thursday, May 1st.
Call 573/526-5544 to make your reservation.

1 Thursday

"Show-Me Missouri Fish" Mobile Aquarium

6:30 PM -- All Ages

Refer to back page for description.

3 Saturday

Storm Drain Stenciling

10 AM-Noon -- Young Adults (13-17)



Missouri STREAM TEAMS need our help!

As an effort to protect and preserve water

quality, we will be labeling storm drains in nearby parking lots. With the message, "Dump No Waste, Drains to Stream," shoppers will be reminded that drains should *never* be used to dispose of wastes! Reservations required.

3 Saturday

Woodcarving 101 - Walking Sticks

1-4 PM -- Ages 16 and over

Sit for a spell with Shelby Jones and the Firehouse Woodcarvers and learn the basics of hand carving. You'll have the chance to debark, sand, and choose a design to carve on your own walking stick. We'll provide the sticks. Please bring a sharp pocket knife and any hand carving chisels you may have. Reservations required.

3 Saturday

Common Birds of North America

2 PM -- All Ages

Jim D. Wilson - artist, author, and longtime professional ornithologist, will open your eyes to the wonder of some of the best loved North American birds. In addition to sharing details about birds, Jim will tickle your fancy with anecdotes about some of his paintings which are on display in the nature center lobby. After the presentation, Jim will be available to sign your copy of his book, *Common Birds of North America*. Books can be purchased from the nature center gift shop. Reservations required.

8 Thursday

Nature Photography

7 PM -- Adults

Jim Rathert, photographer for the Missouri Department of Conservation, will present an illustrated lecture featuring the diverse and beautiful facets of natural Missouri. He'll discuss common as well as rarely seen species and share some of his photographic tips and strategies. This program is sponsored by the River Bluffs Audubon Society. No reservations required.

17 Saturday

Pond Workshop

10 AM - 12:30 PM -- Adults

Planning to build a new pond? Have one but would like to improve it? Then this workshop is for you! Pond construction, vegetation control, and fishing quality will be covered in this comprehensive workshop. Reservations required.

15 Thursday

Wildlifers--Quilt Block

10-11:30 AM, 1-2:30 PM, 3:30-5 PM, and 6-7:30 PM -- 50+ Years

It's an Eagle! It's a Kestrel! No, it's a Red-tailed Hawk! Join us this month as we investigate this interesting bird and create a patchwork block to add to your Missouri Sampler. Reservations required.

24 Saturday

May Flowers

2 PM -- All Ages

April showers are over and the wild lands are full of May flowers! Take a guided hike searching the nature center's acres for these beauties. We'll use field guides to help us identify wildflowers along the way. Dress for easy hiking and spray for hungry chiggers. Reservations required.

29 Thursday

Inspector Insector: Case of the Mystery Insect Eggs

7 PM -- All Ages



Case #6810: The mysterious insect eggs. It has come to the attention of our inspector that mysterious insect eggs were found at the nature center. Help the inspector

question suspects, piece together clues, and find the owner of the eggs. No reservations required.

31 Saturday

The Runge Hiking Club

8 AM-5:30 PM -- 18 Years and older

See splendid sights! Learn about our wondrous state! Come join novice and experienced day hikers alike as we strap on our boots and go! Each month, we'll meet at the nature center, car pool to one of Missouri's choice hiking spots, and hike one or two of the best trails. A naturalist will lead the hikes and point out highlights as we go.

The landscape at **Ha Ha Tonka State Park** is a beautiful blend of karst features, forested hills, and open woodlands. We'll begin on the **Spring Trail** (1.5 miles) to visit

the spring and brave the 316 vertical steps on the boardwalk. After lunch, we'll hike through one of the state's finest savannas on the **Turkey Pen Hollow Trail** (5 miles), and try to catch the yellow cone-flowers at their peak. Bring your lunch, water, hiking boots or comfortable shoes, and come dressed for the weather. Reservations required.

31 Saturday

Nature Notes

11 PM -- All Ages (children accompanied by an adult)

The only U.S. President from Missouri was born this month--Harry S Truman. He spoke at a national park in 1947 and said, "No part of our conservation program can be slighted if we want to make full use of our resources and have full protection against future emergencies." To honor President Truman's birthday, our Nature Notes this month will center on conservation. You are invited to join us as we look around Runge. We'll be writing and sketching the grand results of protecting our natural resources. Reservations required.

31 Saturday

Runge Reading Guild

2:30-4 PM -- Adults

Enjoy reading William Least Heat-Moon's latest best seller, *River-Horse, Across America by Boat*. Join us for a discussion of this inspiring adventure. "This evocative and masterly narrative is a reminder of the beauty and grandeur of our country."--*Library Journal*. Reservations required.

For the little ones . . .

Drip and Drop

Rain, rain, go away, come back another day! Who needs it? We all do! This month, we will have fun playing with rain and maybe even in the rain. It will be a damp, but exciting time. Reservations required.

Babes In The Woods

Birth through 2 years of age

Thursday, May 22 -- 10 AM

Friday, May 30 -- 10 AM

Little Acorns

3 through 6 years of age

Saturday, May 3 -- 10 AM

Saturday, May 10 -- 10 AM

Tuesday, May 13 -- 2 PM

Tuesday, May 13 -- 6 PM

Tuesday, May 27 -- 10 AM

Events for... **June**

Registration for all programs begins on Thursday, May 1st.
Call 573/526-5544 to make your reservation.

4 Wednesday

Gone Fishin'!

2-4 PM -- 3 through 6 years of age
(with an adult)

Grab your favorite adult, hang up the "Gone Fishin'" sign, and join us at one of our ponds for an afternoon of fishing. Folks ages 16-65 will need a current Missouri fishing license. We will provide poles, tackle, and bait. Mother Nature will provide sun, water, and plenty of fish! Reservations required.

8 Sunday

"Wild Home, Sweet Home" Puppet Show

3 PM -- All Ages

Come meet a very UNhuggable critter, Honey Bee. Hear him chat with animal friends like Cottontail Rabbit, Black Bear Cub, and Virginia Opossum about where they live. Discover how they choose their homes and why they like to stay there. No reservations required.

15 Sunday

Don't Bee Afraid—Bee Smart!

2 PM -- All Ages

Yellow and black—watch out! Some wasps and bees sting, but don't let this threat blind you to their many benefits. We'll look at some of Missouri's most common wasps and bees, and learn some of their intriguing habits and abilities. Buzzed by yellow and black? Don't bee afraid—bee smart! Reservations Required.



Wild Weekends!

Drop by the nature center any weekend for a visit. There's always something new to do—crafts, hikes, or games especially for you. No need to call, just stop by between 10 AM and Noon on Saturdays or from 1 to 3 PM on Sundays.

19 Thursday

Wildlifers—Quilt Block

10-11:30 AM, 1-2:30 PM, 3:30-5 PM,
and 6-7:30 PM -- 50+ Years

If you would like to know what a bison looks like as a quilt block, come join us this month as you learn about this amazing mammal. Reservations required.

21 Saturday

The Runge Hiking Club

8 AM-3 PM -- 18 Years and older

This month, the Hiking Club returns to **Graham Cave State Park** to see if we can add to our list of 49 blooming wildflowers and trees from the area. We'll hike two trails, the **Loutre River Trail** (1.5 miles) and the **Indian Glade Trail** (2.25 miles), which takes us on the roof of an elegantly arching shelter cave. We'll also see undercut sandstone ledges, small glades, wet-weather waterfalls, and the Pirate's Plank. Bring your lunch, water, hiking boots or comfortable shoes, and come dressed for the weather. Reservations required.

26 Thursday

Gone Fishin'!

2-4 PM -- 7 through 12 years of age
(with an adult)

Grab your favorite adult, hang up the "Gone Fishin'" sign, and join us at one of our ponds for an afternoon of fishing. Folks ages 16-65 will need a current Missouri fishing license. We will provide poles, tackle, and bait. Mother Nature will provide sun, water, and plenty of fish! Reservations required.

28 Saturday

READY, AIM...FIRE!

1-3 PM -- Young Adults (13-17)



Have you ever shot a bow and arrow? Learn what it takes to shoot like an archery pro! We will provide instruction, equipment, games, targets, and FUN! Wear sturdy shoes and bring a water bottle. Reservations Required.

28 Saturday

Runge Reading Guild

2:30-4 PM -- Adults

Henry David Thoreau was described as a poet-naturalist by his friend Ellery Channing, but he was also a philosopher, historian, rebel, and reporter. Townsend Scudder said, "If Thoreau had never gone to live in a hut at Walden Pond it is possible that he would never have been celebrated. That was the most dramatic thing he ever did; the chronicle of his adventure is a classic." Enjoy reading Thoreau's *Walden* and join us in discussing this exceptional man and his profound writing. Reservations required.

28 Saturday

Nature Notes

11 AM -- All Ages (children accompanied by an adult)

Is poison ivy an irritating plant or an endearing plant? It is one of the UNhuggables in this issue of our newsletter. During this session of Nature Notes, we'll take a closer look at poison ivy. Join us today when we sketch and write about this common Missouri plant—what it looks like and what makes it useful as well as UNhuggable. Reservations required.

For the little ones . . .

Squirm the Worm



Worms don't push their way through dirt, they eat their way! Learn many more interesting facts about these small earth churners. Reservations required.

Babes In The Woods

Birth through 2 years of age

Friday, June 6 – 10 AM

Saturday, June 7 – 11 AM

Thursday, June 26 – 2 PM

Little Acorns

3 through 6 years of age

Thursday, June 5 – 10 AM

Saturday, June 7 – 2 PM

Friday, June 13 – 10 AM

Saturday, June 14 – 10 AM

Tuesday, June 24 – 10 AM